



City of Tempe  
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October 4, 2016

The Honorable Steve Gallardo  
Maricopa County Board of Supervisors  
301 W. Jefferson Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

**Mark W. Mitchell**  
Mayor

Dear Supervisor Gallardo,

I am hoping that you can assist the City of Tempe regarding an issue with the Maricopa County Elections Department (MCED).

In September, MCED eliminated a polling station at the Tempe Knights of Pythias Lodge and replaced it with a polling place at Arizona State University (ASU) for the November 8, 2016 General Election. As you may recall, several entities including ASU students testified at the August 3, 2016 Board of Supervisors meeting and asked that MCED work with ASU to provide a polling location for students. At that meeting, the Board gave direction to approve the polling locations on the agenda and to continue a dialogue with ASU. No direction was given to eliminate the Knights of Pythias location which was used for the August Primary and which serves the Hudson and Tempe precincts.

The City of Tempe was not notified of this change and the City's voter pamphlet vendor printed the polling locations/addresses based on the voter list provided by MCED. Unfortunately, the voter list provided by MCED had not been updated to include the elimination of the Knights of Pythias polling location, and therefore the City's Informational Pamphlet was printed containing the incorrect polling location for voters in two of our precincts, affecting approximately households containing 7,000 registered voters. The same error also occurred on Tempe Elementary and Tempe Union High School Districts' pamphlets.

Instead of offering to rectify this error by either keeping the Knights of Pythias polling location open to voters in these two precincts or even mailing a flyer with the correct information to the residents affected, MCED notified the City of Tempe that they are not planning any additional mailings. MCED instead stated that a sample ballot with the correct polling location will be mailed 11 days prior to the election to each household containing a voter not on the Permanent Early Voting List (PEVL).

This is not fair to the voters in these two precincts. First off, voters on the PEVL who choose to drop off their ballots on Election Day will have been provided the wrong location with no update from MCED as to the correct location. Second, when voters receive "Official Voting Materials" such as an Informational Pamphlet, that information contained in that pamphlet should be factual.

The voters in these two precincts deserve to have accurate information and access to the polls. Not only will they be voting on federal, state and local elections, but the Tempe City Council has called for a Special Bond Election containing 5 separate bond questions that would provide the City with authorization to issue bonds for water, sewer, and street improvements, public safety, and park improvements.

Tempe voters should not be disenfranchised because MCED changed polling locations at the last minute and provided erroneous information to the vendor printing the City's Informational Pamphlet.

What is especially upsetting is that in watching the Board of Supervisors meeting from August 3, 2016, no clear direction was given by the Board to MCED to eliminate the Knights of Pythias polling location. There was a discussion about curb-side voting and resolving some issues with ASU. Then there was a motion to move forward with the item and to continue to work with ASU. By approving the item, the Board of Supervisors gave direction to approve the polling places attached to that agenda item, and the Knights of Pythias Lodge was listed as the polling location for the Hudson and Tempe precincts.

I would respectfully request that the Board help to right this wrong by ensuring that the ASU polling location is an additional polling station and restoring the Knights of Pythias polling location for Tempe residents. The Maricopa County Recorder should follow the direction of the Board of Supervisors.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Mitchell, Mayor  
City of Tempe

cc: Maricopa County Recorder, Helen Purcell